

Message Text

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51

ACTION NEA-09

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SCS-03 AID-05 CIAE-00 DODE-00 FDRE-00

HEW-02 INR-07 NSAE-00 PA-01 PRS-01 RSC-01 SCA-01

USIA-06 EB-07 IO-10 NEAE-00 /054 W

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P 211415Z JAN 75

FM AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 6431

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE NEW DELHI 0980

E. O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: EAID, IN

SUBJECT: EARTHQUAKE

1. ON SUNDAY AFTERNOON, JANUARY 19, AN EARTHQUAKE MEASURING 7 ON THE RICHTER SCALE STRUCK TWO DISTRICTS (KINNAUR AND LAHAUL-SPITI) IN HIMACHAL PRADESH, NEAR THE TIBETAN BORDER. ACCORDING TO PRESS REPORTS IT CLAIMED AT LEAST 49 LIVES AND LEFT MANY INJURED AND HOMELESS. HEAVY DAMAGE TO HOUSES, PROPERTY AND ROADS IS REPORTED. THERE ARE ALSO REPORTS OF HEAVY DAMAGE IN TEBIT.

2. PRESS REPORTS SAY IAF HELICOPTERS ARE AIRDROPPING BLANKETS AND OTHER SUPPLIES; HOWEVER, THESE OPERATIONS ARE APPARENTLY BEING IMPEDED BY POOR FLYING CONDITIONS. DONATIONS TO RELIEF OPERATIONS ARE REPORTED TO HAVE BEEN MADE BY, INTER ALIA, THE PRIME MINISTER (RS. 100,000 OR \$12,500), BY THE GOVERNOR OF THE STATE AND BY THE RED CROSS.

3. THE INDIAN AIR FORCE HAS CONFIRMED TO US THAT THE PRESS REPORTS ARE ESSENTIALLY CORRECT. AT THIS POINT NEITHER THE ARMY OR THE AIR FORCE HAVE ANY ADDITIONAL INFORMATION REGARDING EXTENT OF DAMAGE OR CASUALTIES BEYOND THAT ALREADY REPORTED. BORDER SECURITY FORCES HAVE BEEN DIRECTED TO ASSIST IN RESCUE OPERATIONS AND

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THE INDIAN AIR FORCE IS ASSISTING WITH HELICOPTER SUPPORT.

THE QUAKE DID OCCUR IN A REMOTE AND SPARCELY POPULATED
AREA WITH EXTREMELY LIMITED COMMUNICATIONS FACILITIES.
THEREFORE FULL EXTENT OF DAMAGE MAY NOT BE KNOWN FOR
ANOTHER FEW DAYS.

3. NEITHER WE NOR THE AMERICAN VOLUNTARY AGENCIES
NOR--SO FAR AS WE KNOW--ANY OTHER NON-INDIAN
ORGANIZATION HAS THUS FAR BEEN REQUESTED TO FURNISH
DISASTER ASSISTANCE. WE WILL OF COURSE CONTINUE TO MONITOR
THE SITUATION AND WILL ADVISE FURTHER AS APPROPRIATE.
SCHNEIDER

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